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a manner as to bring out the fact that the plant's food is a solution consisting essentially of carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, nitrogen, sulphur and phosphorus. Destructive metabolism, respiration, and reproduction follow, each including a brief summary of the principal facts.

In the main, the book appears to be brought up to our present knowledge, and, if one must use such a book at all, it may be recommended as giving in a condensed and systematic form the principal facts of Vegetable Morphology and Physiology. It remains to be said that, while the book bears the name of the American publisher on its title-page, both printing and binding were done by a London house, a new title-page alone having been pasted in to replace the original one.—*Charles E. Bessey.*

MICROSCOPICAL PHYSIOGRAPHY OF THE ROCK-MAKING MINERALS. By H. Rosenbusch. Translated by Joseph P. Iddings. New York: Wiley & Sons, 1888. Illustrated by 121 wood-cuts and 26 plates of photomicrographs. xiii. and 333 pp.—With the excellent translation of Prof. Rosenbusch's book, presented us by Mr. Iddings, there can no longer remain an excuse for the continued neglect of microscopical petrography by our colleges and advanced schools. Heretofore the immense mass of facts relating to the microscopical properties of minerals which have accumulated within the past ten or fifteen years, have been beyond the reach of those who are not familiar with the German language. The excellent compendium of Prof. Rosenbusch has not been available to English-speaking students on either side of the Atlantic. It is a matter for congratulation that the first translation of this book should have been made into English by an American Scientist, and by one who has proven himself so capable of undertaking the task as has Mr. Iddings.

The translation is at the same time an abridgement. The six hundred and sixty-four pages of the original have been reduced by the translator to three hundred and thirty-three. This has been accomplished by omitting the bibliography (which occupies eighty-eight pages in the original), by excluding the purely historical portions, and by restricting within narrow limits the discussion of the anomalous action of certain minerals in polarized light. Since these matters would be of little value to any but the advanced student in the subject, and since such a one must of necessity go to the original sources for his information, Mr. Iddings has done well in deciding not to confuse the mind of the beginner with too much of the unessential. So far as a hurried reading of the book allows one to judge, everything essential to the study of the optical properties of the rock-forming minerals has been retained, and in many cases additions have been made to the description of those minerals

which have been found to be much more widespread as constituents of rocks than was supposed when the German edition was published three years ago.

A further reduction in the size of the book is effected by a rather free translation, by which an entire sentence is sometimes reduced to the position of a short qualifying phrase, and by the omission of certain tables of refractive indices, but more especially by the exclusion of the references to the occurrences of the various minerals in rocks of foreign localities. To compensate for the latter loss, notes on American occurrences have been copiously inserted.

The style of the language used is clear; the expressions are forcible; and, better than all else, the reader of the translation may rest assured that he is getting the exact thought of the author of the original.

Not only is Mr. Iddings to be commended for his careful translation, but Messrs. Wiley & Sons are likewise to be congratulated on producing a work of such a pleasant appearance as the book before us.

The only fault that can be found with the volume is its price. It would seem that in view of the fact that the translation will meet with a ready sale in England and America, its price might have been placed at such a figure as to enable every one taking a course in geology to indulge in the luxury of a few weeks' work with the beautiful objects in rocks revealed to our eyes when aided by the polarizing microscope.—*W. S. B.*

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## GENERAL NOTES.

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### GEOGRAPHY AND TRAVEL.

**NANSEN'S GREENLAND EXPEDITION.**—The last mail from Norway brings more information about the Nansen expedition to the interior of Greenland. The expedition consisted of the following named daring men, under the leadership of Dr. Frithjof Nansen, conservator of the Bergen Museum; Lieut. Olaf Dietrichsen, Mate Otto Sverdrup, Christian C. Trana, Ole N. Ravna, and Samuel J. Batto, all especially selected men, strong and healthy in body and mind and good "ski-runners." "Ski" are the snow shoes extensively used in Norway for travelling over the snow fields of that country. The party left Norway on May 2; travelled by steamer as far as to Iceland, where they arrived in the middle of June. From Iceland the whaler Jason brought them over to Greenland, and on the